



Indiana State Department of Health

Epidemiology Resource Center



Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Program Newsletter

June 2013

For questions or suggestions, contact
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What's Going On?

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) would like to increase viral hepatitis awareness and education. Please contact Brittany M. Gross at bgross@isdh.in.gov regarding your training needs.

Updates from Hepatitis Awareness Month

➤ Testing Event

As part of National Hepatitis Awareness Month and National Hepatitis Testing Day, ASPIRE Indiana, in Richmond, IN, hosted a drop in testing event. People stopped by the clinic during their hours of operation, with no appointment necessary, to get tested. Additionally, the clinic has decided to have drop in testing days at least once a month. The next drop in testing day is scheduled for June 11 from 9 a.m. to noon.

➤ Hepatitis Walk

Always Reflecting Kindness (ARK) hosted the Walk for Hepatitis C on May 18. They had an amazing turn out despite rainy conditions. 60 people participated and funds were raised to support ARK in their activities. For more information, visit their website at www.hepcark.org

➤ Social Media

Throughout the month of National Hepatitis Awareness Month in May, the ISDH released social media messages on their Facebook and Twitter accounts. To date, ISDH has released more than nine hepatitis related messages through either Twitter or Facebook. Messages like “#Hepatitis B can be a chronic life-long infection leading to liver #cancer. Get tested today! #HepAware #HTD #HepB” were tweeted. Check out ISDH’s twitter account @StateHealthIN and like the ISDH Facebook page to see what information was released.

Spotlight on...

Updated Testing Guidance for Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)

In May, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released updated testing guidance for clinicians and laboratorians in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR). The CDC explains that the reason for the update is “because of 1) changes in the availability of certain commercial HCV antibody tests, 2) evidence that many persons who are identified as reactive by an HCV antibody test might not subsequently be evaluated to determine if they have current HCV infection and 3) significant advances in the development of antiviral agents with improved efficacy against HCV. Although previous guidance has focused on strategies to detect and confirm HCV antibody, reactive results from HCV antibody testing cannot distinguish between persons whose past HCV infection has resolved and those who are currently HCV infected. Persons with current infection who are not identified as currently infected will not receive appropriate preventive services, clinical evaluation and medical treatment. Testing strategies must ensure the

identification of those persons with current HCV infection.” To review the MMWR, visit <http://1.usa.gov/12oVQku>

Baby-Boomers and Hepatitis

With National Hepatitis Testing day, May 19, just behind us, it is critical to understand why testing is important and why the baby-boomers are a target for testing. Viral hepatitis can be a serious liver infection that leads to liver disease and cancer. Many people have hepatitis and are unaware of their infection. To read more about hepatitis testing and the baby-boomers, visit <http://bit.ly/12oNvgP>.

Upcoming Viral Hepatitis Events

➤ Indiana's 6th Annual HepFest Festival

Date: June 15, 2013, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Location: Rieke Park
1850 N. Indiana Ave.
Auburn, IN 46703

Contact: Christie Soaper
260-927-8180
260-515-5130

This is a FREE public event to increase awareness of hepatitis and bring people together. Come out and enjoy live music and games for the kids!

Hepatitis Resources

➤ Video

To view a video on the importance of the hepatitis B vaccine at birth, visit <http://bit.ly/1oQs5HP>.

➤ Online Training Opportunity

[HCV Education for New Treaters Available from AASLD](#)

The American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) has launched a new educational program providing practical strategies for managing patients with viral hepatitis C. ACT-on-HCV is designed to increase the confidence and competence of healthcare professionals who are new to providing care for patients with HCV and is available for free through the LiverLearning.org website.

Five interactive modules, webinars and an experiential component address:

- An overview of HCV
- Genotyping and predictors of response
- Selecting patients
- Initiating treatment and the first eight weeks
- Managing side effects of therapy

Free registration is required. [Click here to begin.](#)

➤ Online Training Opportunity



Psychosocial Readiness Evaluation and Preparation for Hepatitis C Treatment (PREP-C)

The PREP-C provides hepatitis C health care providers of all levels a standardized method for assessing a patient's readiness to begin HCV treatment. By identifying psychosocial factors that can potentially interfere with treatment adherence prior to treatment initiation, health care providers have the opportunity to provide support and interventions in order to improve psychosocial stability so that treatment is most tolerable and successful.

How to use the PREP-C:

- The PREP-C interactive assessment tool is now available online free of charge for health care providers to use with their patients. Learn more at www.PREPC.org.
- The PREP-C can also be used as training for health care providers who seek to understand the ideal elements involved in a comprehensive HCV pre-treatment psychosocial evaluation.
- Monthly PREP-C Training and Discussion Tele-conference calls are conducted free of charge. Learn more and register at www.PREPC.org

The PREP-C was developed by Jeffrey J. Weiss, PhD, MS, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York, New York; Carolyn A. Licht, PhD, SUNY Downstate Research Foundation, Brooklyn, New York; Nirah Johnson, LMSW, NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, Office of Viral Hepatitis Coordination, Long Island City, New York.

Viral Hepatitis Updates & News

➤ Twin Epidemics: HIV and Hepatitis C in the urban Northeast

A new Yale study looks at the scope and consequences of a burgeoning health problem in the cities of the U.S. Northeast: concurrent infection with both HIV and HCV. Eight percent of those studied were infected with HIV. Ten percent were infected with HCV and just over a fourth were co-infected with both HIV and HCV. To read more, visit <http://bit.ly/14o9Ddu>.

➤ Burden of Hepatitis B in Asian American and Pacific Islander Populations

One out of 12 Asian Americans is infected with chronic (lifelong) hepatitis B infection and two out of three are unaware that they are infected. "Asian American and Pacific Islanders make up five percent of the total population in the U.S., but account for more than 50 percent of Americans living with chronic hepatitis B," says Joan Block, executive director of the Hepatitis B Foundation. Testing will help individuals discover their infection in time to benefit from medical care and treatments, saving their lives and protecting those around them from becoming infected. Resources and ideas of ways to promote awareness and testing for those in the Asian American and Pacific Islander populations of your communities can be viewed at <http://1.usa.gov/1oIIS8O>

➤ Hepatitis A infections in New Mexico and Colorado

State and local health departments in New Mexico and Colorado are investigating a cluster of hepatitis A cases. Since May 1, two cases have been reported in New Mexico residents and four cases have occurred in Colorado residents. Onset dates for the cases range from May 1 to May 14. Among the six cases, four (66%) are male and the age range is 35 years to 71 years. Initial interviews indicate that all six cases regularly shop at large warehouse-style stores and purchased a variety of produce items. The investigation is ongoing and other exposures have not been ruled out. Keep this information in mind if any recent cases of hepatitis A are identified that might have a connection to New Mexico, Colorado or other southwestern or western states or regularly shop at large warehouse-style stores. This information is preliminary and part of an ongoing investigation that can change at any time.

Hepatitis A, caused by infection with the hepatitis A virus (HAV), has an incubation period of approximately 28 days (range: 15–50 days). HAV replicates in the liver and is shed in high concentrations in feces from two weeks before to one week after the onset of clinical illness. HAV infection produces a self-limited disease that does not result in chronic infection or chronic liver disease. More information on hepatitis A may be found at <http://bit.ly/193PbBx>.